

## Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 A-01 OPR-01 SY-04

OC-05 CCO-00 AID-05 PC-01 IO-10 OMB-01 SCCT-01 NIC-01

/096 W

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P 171325Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6382

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MADRAS PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 0847

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJECT: PORT STRIKE

REF: NEW DELHI 0823

1. ACCORDING TO SOURCE IN MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANS-  
PORT, PORT AND DOCK WORKERS THROUGHOUT INDIA ARE REFUSING  
TO OBEY BACK-TO-WORK ORDER ISSUED UNDER DEFENSE OF INDIA  
RULES. ALL-INDIA PORT AND DOCK WORKERS' FEDERATION PRESIDENT,  
S.R. KULKARNI, HAS OFFERED TO CALL OFF THE STRIKE  
WITHIN "A MOMENTS NOTICE PROVIDED AN HONORABLE SETTLEMENT  
IS REACHED", AND HAS CALLED FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS.  
INITIAL WORKERS' DEMAND FOR RS. 100 PER MONTH INTERIM  
INCREASE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 1974, HAS BEEN REDUCED TO  
RS. 60 PER MONTH. GOI HAS OFFERED RS. 25 PER MONTH FOR 1974  
(RS. 300 FOR THE YEAR), AND RS. 50 PER MONTH BEGINNING  
JANUARY 1, 1975 KULKARNI AS DESCRIBED DIFFERNECE IN  
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THESE POSITIONS AS "SO NARROW THAT SATISFACTORY

SETTLEMENT COULD BE REACHED AND THE NATION SAVED FROM THE DISASTROUS IMPACT OF THE STRIKE".

2. MOTIVATION FOR STRIKE APPEARS AT THIS TIME TO BE PURELY ECONOMIC. WAGES WERE LAST REVISED FOR PORT AND DOCK WORKERS ON JANUARY 1,1969. PORT AND DOCK WORKERS ARE NOW RECEIVING MINIMUM MONTHLY WAGES OF RS. 292 UNDER AGREEMENT WHICH EXPIRED DECEMBER 31,1973. WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO COMPARE WAGES FOR PORT AND DOCK WORKERS WITH THOSE OF OTHER SECTORS, FOLLOWING COMPARISONS APPEAR MOST RELEVANT: MINIMUM WAGES FOR UNSKILLED LABOR IN STATE TRADING CORPORATION, WHICH HAS MANY ACTIVITIES IN PORT AREAS, RANGE FROM RS. 389 TO RS. 570 PER MONTH AS OF JANUARY 1,1974. ON THE OTHER HAND, MINIMUM WAGES FOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES RANGE FROM RS. 270 TO RS. 447 PER MONTH AS OF SAME DATE.

3. WE ESTIMATE THAT EACH DAY'S OFFLOADING OF FOOD GRAINS FROM INDIA'S PORTS IS SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE ONE DAY'S FOOD FOR 45 MILLION PEOPLE. THIS FACTOR, COUPLED WITH OTHER SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF STRIKE, CAN BE EXPECTED TO PRESSURE PARTIES TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THIS STRIKE.  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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